



## Valley of Flowers

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Level 4





I sighed as I threw another pebble into the crystal clear lake. It fell in with a splat, little droplets sprinkling onto me. My mind went back in flashback.

*"You are worthless!" My mother screamed at me as an innocent tear rolled down my cheek and she groaned.*

*"Don't start crying now." She warned me, just as a sob escaped my lips. She charged towards me and got hold of my forearms.*

*"Get out, now!" She shrieked and I flinched.*

*"I..I'm so..sorry." I stuttered nervously. I never knew breaking a glass bowl could cause so much trouble.*

*"Just get out! I don't want to see your face anymore!" And with that, she roughly hauled me outside the house, pushing me away.*





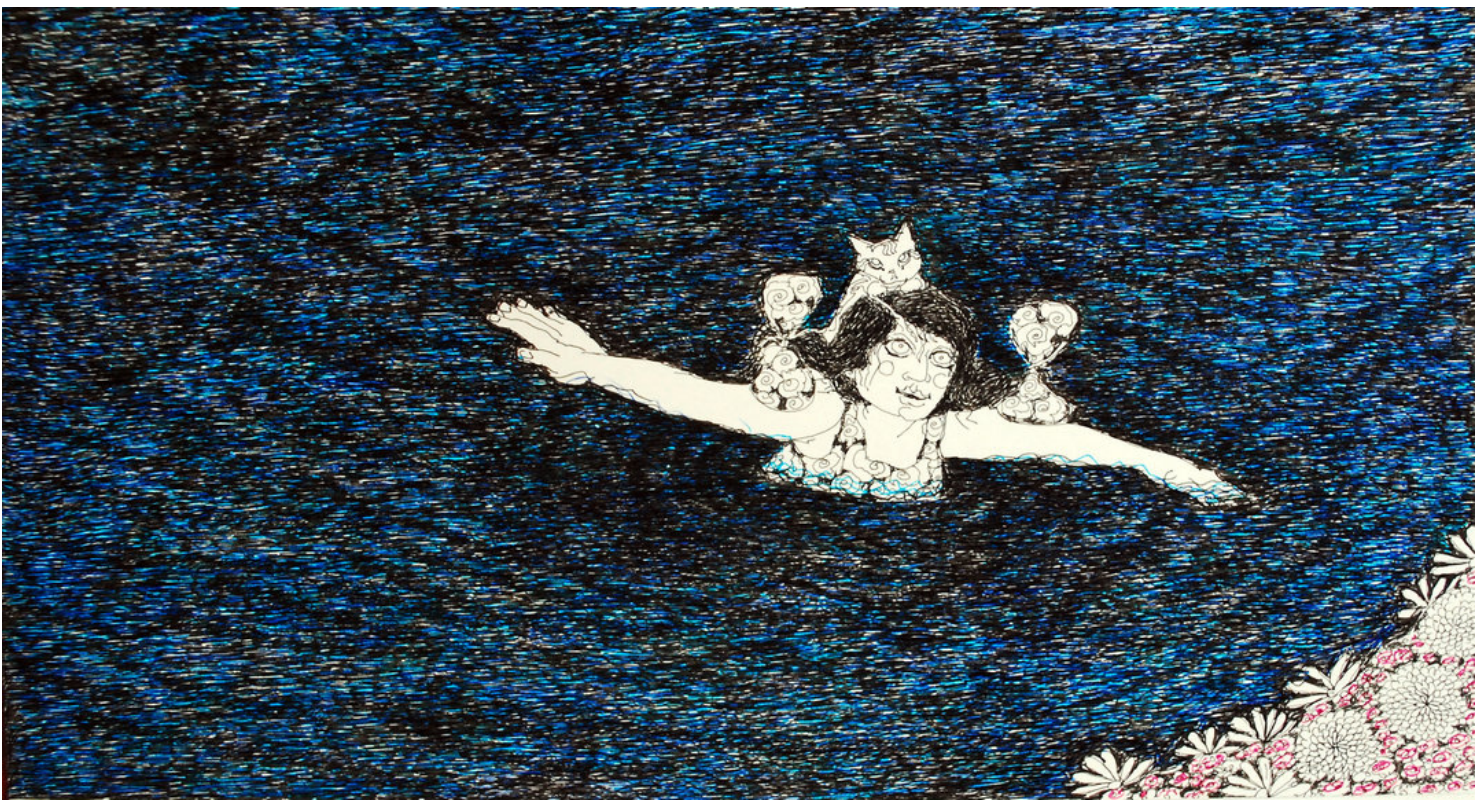
*"Just go!" She screeched and with that, the door banged shut on my face. Tears distorted my vision and uncontrollable cries gushed out of my mouth.*

I shook my head to get rid of those horrendous thoughts. My dad, he had married this cruel woman long after my mother's death and brought home, Elizabeth Moore Rose aka my step mother. She had always despised me and I've got no idea why.

As for my dad, he mostly stays out of town, often going on tours for business purposes. I missed him because while he was at home, she wouldn't even dare touch me.

Today, while I was doing the household chores, I accidentally knocked down her favourite and the costliest glass bowl. As





anger overtook her completely.

I sighed yet again and decided to take a dip in the water. The lake in front of me was so calm and appealing, that it was impossible to resist it, especially after the hard day I experienced. This lake is my only consort whenever I feel utterly lonely and today this lake like my long lost mother was again ready to envelop me in her arms.

I stepped into it, the cool water immediately enclosing me. I smiled and splattered it everywhere, having fun. The light current sailed past me, carrying me a little. These calm moments were my favourite, when nothing else mattered. After a good amount of time, I climbed out of the lake and the cool breeze blowing past me, made me shudder. The





I dragged myself back towards my house. I didn't know if that lady would let me in, but I had nowhere else to go. As I walked back, surprisingly, for the first time ever I noticed a valley in the east direction. I tip toed towards it, mesmerized by its beauty. I wondered why I have not seen it earlier despite my frequent trips to the lake since my childhood.

There was a narrow pathway, covered with a blanket of brown mud. Weeds popped out from it. There were broad hills on either side, adorned with concoction of green, red, pink and yellow. The grass grew on it along with pretty, small flowers, fluttering in the cool breeze.

"Who are you?" An eerie and deep voice whispered behind





I took a deep breath and turned back to see....nothing?  
There was absolutely nothing there, only air filled the space. I strained my ears to catch any movements, but no, all I could hear, far and wide, was the melodious chirping of the birds that flew high up in the sky.

I peered up to see the calm sky, with the marshmallows like clouds floating along with the breeze, which made my heart swell with pleasure.

Suddenly, I noticed a strange sight and my eyes widened in horror and confusion.

There she was, a lady, dressed in complete red. She had two wings popping out from behind her either shoulder. Her wavy, long, brown hair was cascaded down her shoulders,





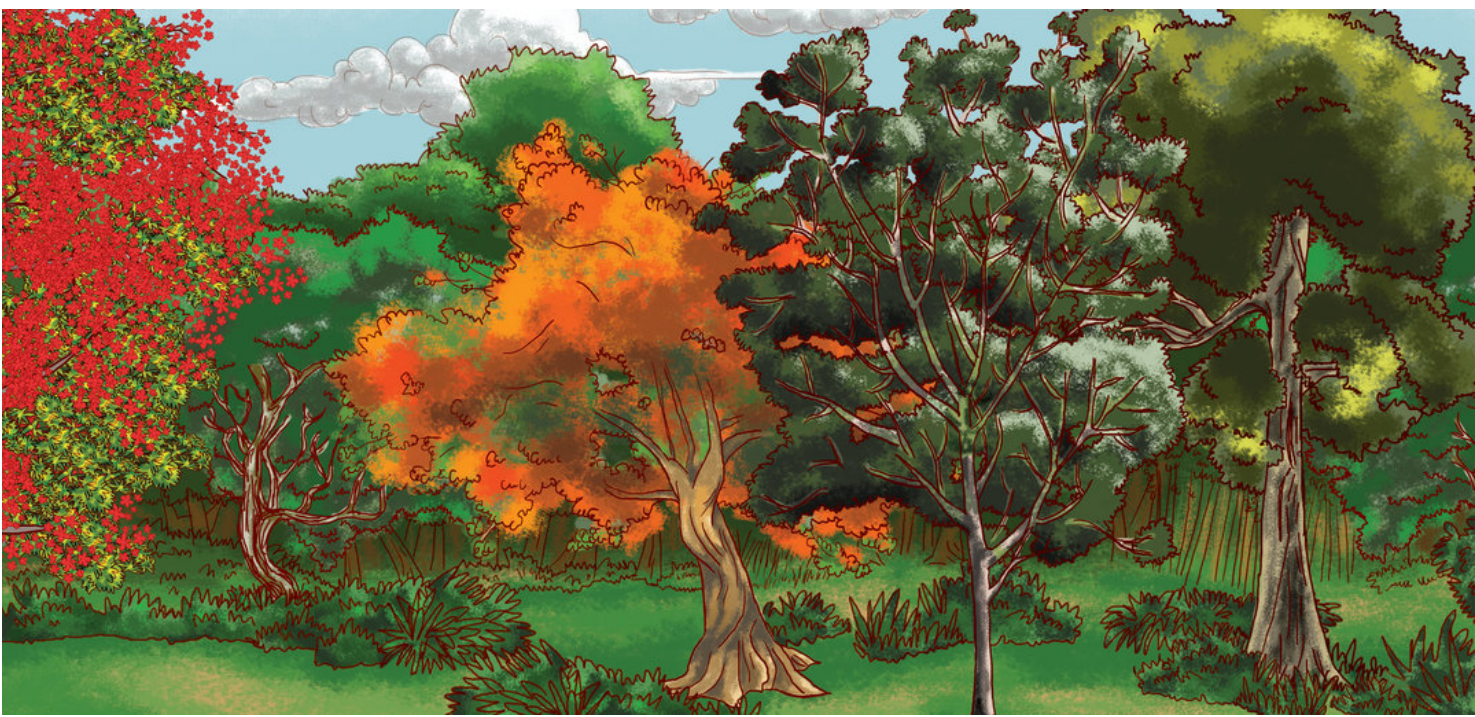
She seemed so peaceful and enthusiastic as she flew in the sky like a bird, her wings elegantly fluttering in the wind. As soon as her ocean blue eyes spotted me, her look mirrored mine and she slowly charged towards the ground. Her wings stopped their movements abruptly as her feet gracefully touched the ground. She slowly moved towards me, as though afraid of what I might do.

I couldn't run from there, my feet remained fixated to the ground. My mind refused to process the strange information in my brain and I simply stood there, numb and stunned.

"Who are you?" She asked me silently, her voice shaky.

"I..I'm Claire." I nervously stuttered. But who won't be nervous after encountering a fictional character? I was just





that point whether she is for real or I am dreaming.

“What are you doing here....in the Valley of flowers?” She asked me and I scowled at her.

*Valley of flowers?* Never heard of that....

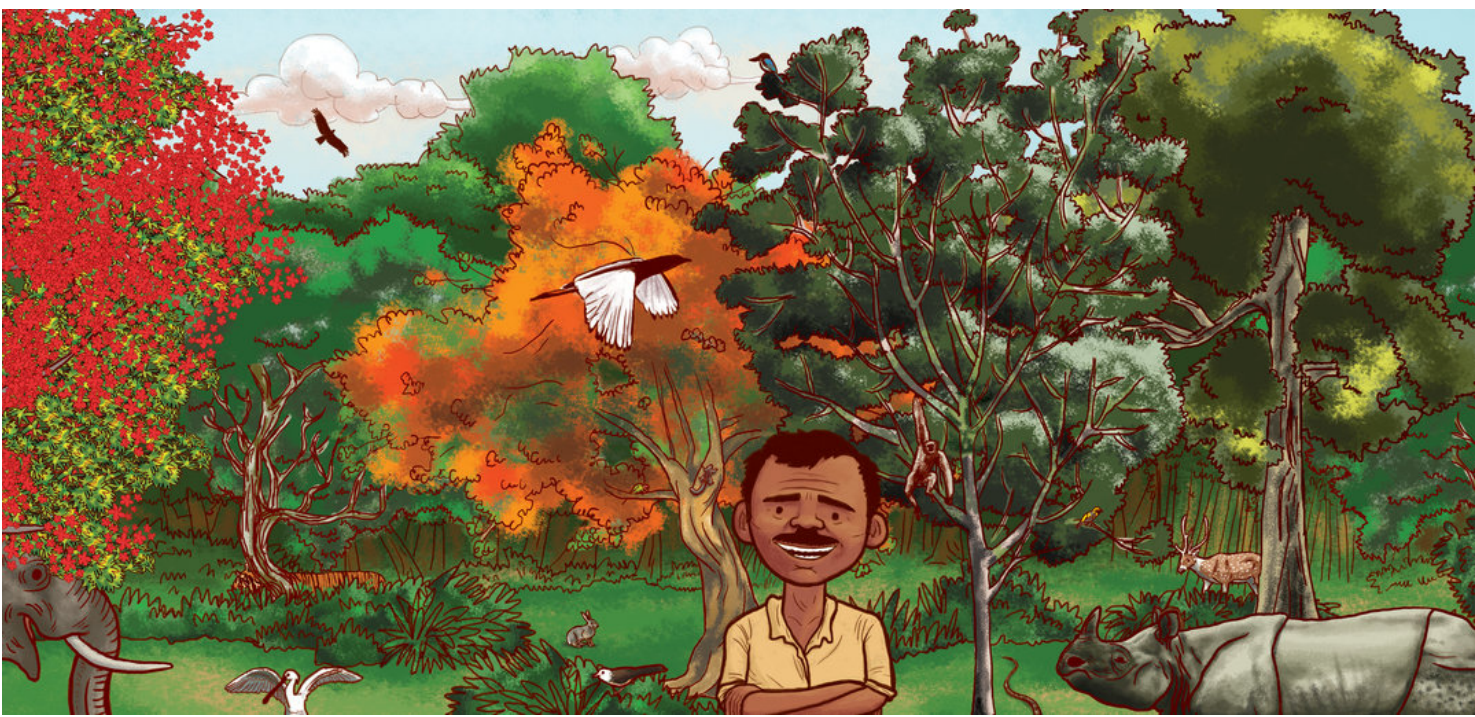
“Valley of flowers?” I wondered aloud and she smiled slightly.

“Yes. This place has been deprecated of human beings; no one from the other world can enter here.” She explained, increasing my confusion.

“I don’t understand.” I told her and she bit her lip.

“I know this might seem unreal, but just until a century ago, humans and we lived together, in peace,” she began, scratching the back of her neck, “But there came a time, when the humans





started dominating us. We fought for our rights, but they massively outnumbered us and we were overpowered. After that, all of us came out of the human world and found this place which we named, the Valley of flowers. The humans cannot enter this area; in fact, this valley is not even visible to them.

“Oh.” was all I could say. This was unheard of. Never in my wildest dreams would I have thought of this theory.

“This gives rise to a question - since you are a human, how can you see this valley?” She asked me, her face scrunched up in confusion.

She was right. How could I see this place?

“I don’t know,” I honestly answered and she raised a





"Really." I added, trying to make it believable.

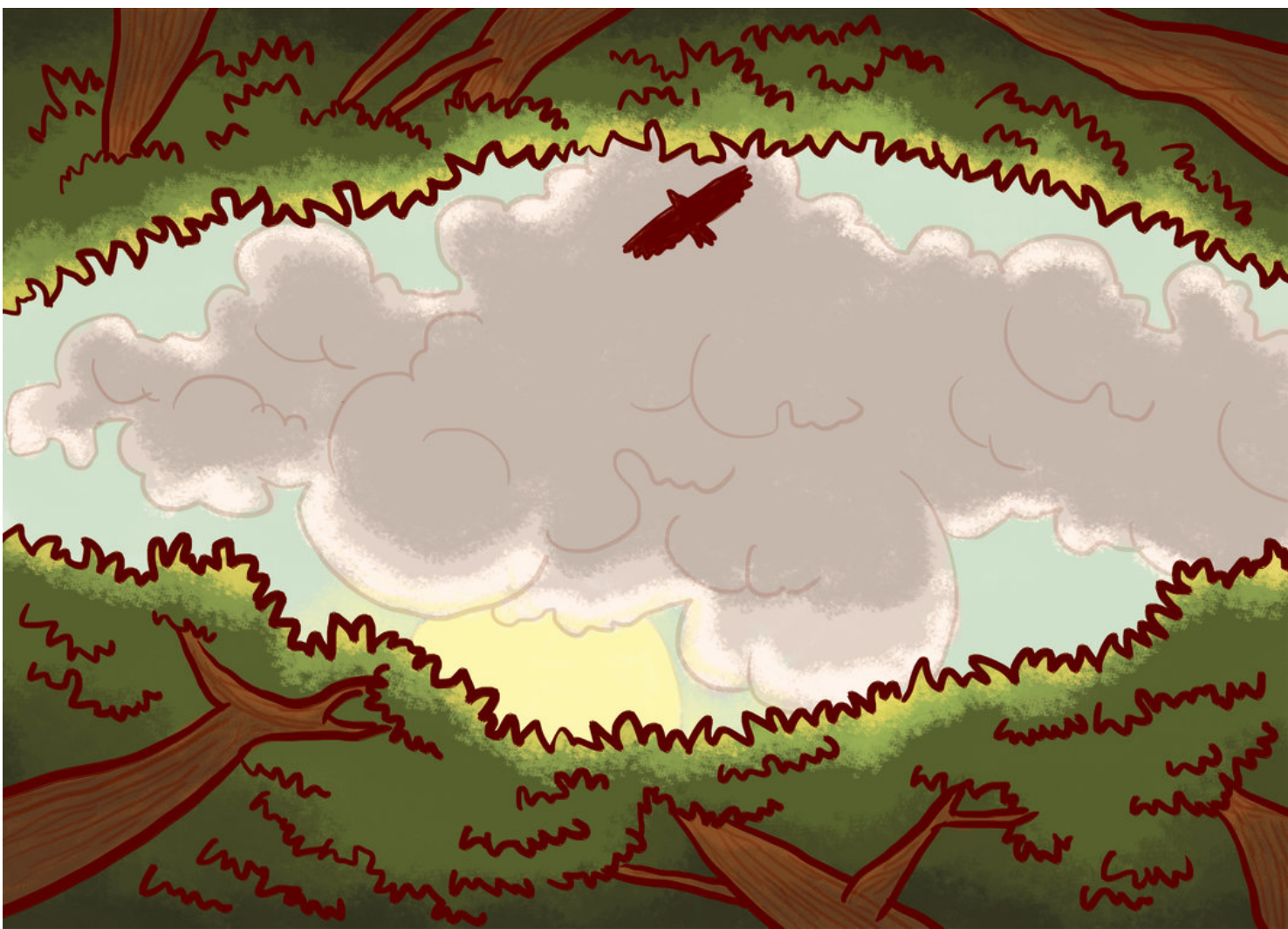
"How did you even enter this place?" She questioned me.

"I was just sitting by the lake there" I said, pointing towards the lake. She glanced past me and then nodded her head, as though signaling me to continue further, "I was just going home, when I happened to notice this place. It seemed quite intriguing, so before I knew it, I landed up here."

"That's strange. No human can ever see this place. Actually it was designed keeping in mind the capability of a human's eye. Their capacity to see is much lower than ours." She explained and I nodded, despite getting further confused.

"Anyway, so now that you know about this place, just remember, never to disclose this secret to anybody," she





warned me and I nodded again, "I would have kept you here, so that there is no chance that anyone knows about us, but I can't do that. If the authorities of this area hear about a human living here, they might kill you, or perhaps even something worse...." Her cheerful voice lowered to a whisper on the last line.

I gulped, "Sure, thanks."

Suddenly a question arouse in my mind, "Hey, you said you aren't a human, then who are you?"

"Does that matter?" She asked, shaking her head.

"Yes, I want to know." I told her and she chuckled.

"Demanding, much?"

"Yes."





"I'm sorry but I can't let you know." She disagreed, peering at the ground below us.

"Why?"

"I said I can't!" She snapped at me and I flinched.

"Okay." I yielded in. She looked stubborn; there was no way she was giving in.

The point that startled me the most was that she wasn't a human. She looks like a human, walks and talks like a human, the only difference being, that she has the capability to fly, which normal beings don't have. Nevertheless, if anyone saw her on the ground, without her wings, she could easily be mistaken for a human being.

"Can I see your beautiful valley before I leave?" I asked with





curiosity to explore and understand the other world better. “No, this is not allowed.” she whispered with uncertainty dripping down from her tongue. I motioned to turn back with a dejected look.

“Wait.... I don’t know why but you remind me of someone close and I don’t like this sad look on your pretty face. I will take you for tour, only if you promise to be careful. Just act like you are one of us.” She almost breathed the last sentence.

“Sure. I will remember.” I told her, excitement bubbling up inside me with a degree of fear of unknown.

“But, I don’t have wings,” I pointed out, “I might stand out in there.”





don't." She explained and my mouth formed an 'o'.

"So are you, like, a security guard?" I questioned her idiotically and she chuckled, nodding.

"Yes."

"But, you said that the humans can't see this place. So from whom are you protecting this valley?" I inquired.

"There aren't only humans that are a threat to this area," She sighed, "After we moved to this valley, the creatures living here divided into minute clusters and that gave rise to the internal wars. This is just like your world. Now, we have different valleys. So there are fifty security guards in each valley that are bound to protect the area if the creatures of any other valley impose a threat on theirs."





"Oh. That's interesting." I complimented and she rolled her eyes.

"Sure is." She said and started leading the way inside the place. I ran to catch up with her.

"Jennifer!" A faint voice called and the lady beside me, turned around. I saw another one run towards us, her white dress messily flowing behind her.

"Hey Lillian, what's wrong?" She asked as I glance between them.

"Actually, I just spotted you here, so I thought we could...." she trailed off when her eyes landed on me, "Who's this?"

"Um...she's Claire." Jennifer answered and Lillian smiled at me.





"That's because she doesn't live here." Jennifer explained and Lillian wore a puzzled expression on her face.

"What do you mean?"

"It's a secret. Don't tell anyone but..." Jennifer's eyes wavered as if looking for the right words. Her expression changed after a moment and she looked into Lillian's eyes and whispered, "She's a human."

"What? How? When?" She bombarded us with questions.

"I'm not so sure. She just said that unknowingly, she stumbled in this place." Jennifer explained.

"Impossible!" Lillian exclaimed, her mouth open wide, "If she could see this valley, then that means that she is not a human."





a human being.

‘You can’t be.’

“Is there a chance that she is one of us, then? She anyways reminded me of someone who was really close to me but I just can’t recall, who?” Jennifer chimed in and I snapped my head towards her.

“No, I am...” I began but Lillian beat me to it, “Yes. She is indeed one of us then.” She said with an authoritative tone.

“How can you say that?” I inquired, my interest growing with each passing second.

“My father was in the team of engineers who designed our valley. The team smartly created a thin film of gases and certain chemicals which is not visible to the human eye. A





A human's eye is just not capable to see beyond this thin film which covers our entire valley. Those who can see this place are definitely not humans." She explained, crossing her arms and shifting her weight onto one leg.

I just stood there, too stunned to speak. Was I really not a human?

"But...I lived in the human world." I reasoned and she chuckled.

"Well dear, there was a time when humans and we lived together. So while we were fleeing from that world, some of us were left behind. You might be carrying their genes. Well, that's the only logical explanation I could think of." Lillian said, her hands clasped in front of her.





the name Milena strike a chord?"

"Yes. Well, she used to be one of my best friends, until she had....eloped." Jennifer sighed, "But how do you know her?"

"Well.... she was my mother." I told them, everything making sense now. The pieces fit, all the random possibilities came together and here now, the story formed.

"What?" They gasped.

"Yes." I confirmed and their faces broke into smiles but mine faded.

"But then...how did I end up in the human world?" I asked.

"Well, I remember, it was real big news in those times that Milena had eloped with a human. It shocked our entire valley and it milled the rumour mills for long." Jennifer said.





"Where is Milena now?" Lillian asked.

"She's is no more. She died in an accident few years ago, leaving me and my father alone." I said hiding my tears. They both looked at me, with pitiful expressions on their faces. Despite all the pain I felt talking about my deceased mother, I was still happy to discover my mother's side of the family and this chance revelation even made me wonder whether I can stay here forever and get out of my stepmother's clutches.

"S..so now, can I stay here?" I asked, unsure, and they nodded their heads in affirmation.

"If you're one of us, you are bound to live here. Forever..." Both of them chorused, and that line, turned out to be my fate.





my attention.

“Okay.” I shrugged.

“Now that I’m one of you, can you please tell me who are we?” I insisted and I watched as both of them wore nervous and unsure looks on their faces.

“Should we...” Jennifer started, her question directed to Lillian.

“Yes.” She said, as her expression replaced with a determined one. She stopped walking and both of us looked at her. She faced me and caught hold of my shoulders.

“Claire, as you know we don’t belong to the human race,” She began, squeezing my shoulders, “We are originally from Meratia planet. This planet is located in the Rova Galaxy,





been able to discover our planet and galaxy.”

She started hesitating once again and I raised an eyebrow, “Continue.” I demanded.

“Meratians often went on space trips. Our ancestors were a part of the space tour in search of a new galaxy, a completely new place, which no Meratian was aware of,” Jennifer explained and I turned towards her as Lillian let go of my shoulders, “They surprisingly tumbled into this galaxy and saw the nine intriguing planets revolving around this huge star.”

“So they entered Earth?” I asked and she nodded.

“Yes, this blue planet caught their interest the most. They directed the spaceship towards this place and landed here





in a small village close to a river. The humans were quite warm and welcoming and Meratians enjoyed human company for a few days. When it was time to go back, they couldn't. The spaceship had unknowingly disappeared and there was no way they could send a signal back to Meratia for help. They tried all possible means to locate the spaceship but it simply vanished in thin air. The chieftain of the village understood the whole situation and offered some land so that Meratians could settle themselves down." She continued.

"But, our breed grows rapidly. The reproduction system within Meratians is comparatively faster to that of humans because we reproduce asexually, by dividing ourselves into



“What? This sounds abnormal.” I commented.

“Why do you think its abnormal? Don’t the unicellular creatures on earth reproduce with the same method.” explained Jennifer.

“Look, we started out with a group of ten people landing on Earth, and now our population is close to one billion,” Lillian took over the topic again, spreading her hands proudly and pointed to her valley, where I could see people hustling and bustling on the streets, “There came a time that inhabitants of the village started getting intimidated by the fact that we would soon outnumber them and would take over their world. So they started prohibiting us from reproducing, but Meratians remained stubborn. We refused to be dominated





“So the village folk got worried and started torturing the Meratians. But unfortunately, there was no way we could go back. So to save our people from torture our engineers gathered and created this magical valley. We made a hideout here and this place vanished into thin air, like it never existed...” Jennifer concluded and I nodded, now everything making complete sense.

“So even I am a Meratian?” I asked, glancing at both of them and they nodded.

“Yes. And here, you belong to our beloved, Valley of flowers. So welcome home!” Lillian greeted, a smile adorned her face as she flung an arm around my shoulder.

“Thank you.” I muttered as we walked further into the town,

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# Valley of Flowers

(English)

A valley invisible to humans resided by unknown creatures....

This is a Level 4 book for children who can read fluently and with confidence.



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